<u>IN THE CLAIMS</u>

Please cancel claims 1-4, 6-8, 17-20 and 20-24, and amend claim 14 as follows:

1-8. (CANCELED)

9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A computer-implemented method for developing multi-tier business application for execution on a multiple tier network, comprising:

creating and maintaining the multi-tier business application using an Integrated Development Environment (IDE) executed by a computer,

wherein the Integrated Development Environment includes a Topological Multi-Tier Business Application Composer that accepts commands from a developer, and in response thereto, graphically creates and maintains the multi-tier business application, the Topological Multi-Tier Business Application Composer includes a window and a palette, the palette contains graphical constructs, representing tiers of the multiple tier computer network and components of each of the tiers, that are used to create and maintain a graphical representation of the multi-tier business application in the window, and when creating the multi-tier business application, accepts commands from the developer, and in response thereto, creates and maintains the tiers, the components of each of the tiers, and defines processing performed by each of the components of each of the tiers,

wherein the Integrated Development Environment includes a Meta-model that captures and persistently stores information from the Topological Multi-Tier Business Application Composer, the information including hardware, software and communications attributes used for analyzing an optimal deployment configuration for the multi-tier business application, and

wherein the Integrated Development Environment includes an Interactive Agent that monitors the Meta-model for an occurrence of an event that comprises a possible non-optimization of the multi-tier business application, and the occurrence of the event causes the Interactive Agent to display for the developer recommended actions to take in response for the event.

10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The computer-implemented method of claim 9, wherein the graphical constructs are dragged from the palette onto the window, and thereafter connected together, in a topological structure for the multi-tier business application.

11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The computer-implemented method of claim 9, wherein the components are workstations, servers, application files, connections, data paths, user-defined processes, and other user-defined elements.

12. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The computer-implemented method of claim 9, wherein the Topological Multi-Tier Business Application Composer is used for specifying properties that identify each of the tiers and the components of the tiers.

13. (CANCELED)

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The computer-implemented method of claim 9, wherein the captured information is information about tiers, workstations, servers, application files, connections, data paths, user-defined processes, and other user-defined elements.

15. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The computer-implemented method of claim 9, wherein the Meta-model is updated and kept in synchronization with any updates made to the multi-tier business application via the Topological Multi-Tier Business Application Composer.

16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The computer-implemented method of claim 9, wherein the Meta-model is accessible by other tools.

17-24. (CANCELED)